

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Sylvin Technologies Inc

#### Mid-Pennsylvania Manufacturing Extension Partnership

#### Sylvin Technologies Uses Training To Mold Its Future

##### **Client Profile:**

Sylvin Technologies, Inc., founded in 1978, develops vinyl compounds to satisfy demanding end-product requirements in a diverse range of applications and industries. An extrusion process is used to plasticate (fuse) the polymer together. Sylvin Technologies' main markets are wire and cable, molding, and general purpose extrusion. Sylvin currently employs 39 people at its plant in Denver, Pennsylvania.

##### **Situation:**

Sylvin Technologies conducted research to identify customer concerns. One key concern was that melt temperatures were too high compared to the company's competition, and another stated that there was inconsistency within and between lots received from Sylvin. There was also inconsistency in throughput rates, which was having a negative impact on job costing. The root cause of many of these issues was traced back to inconsistent knowledge and practices created by existing training programs that relied on too many varieties of techniques and in-house instructors.

Sylvin Technologies and MANTEC, a NIST MEP network affiliate and a division of the Mid-Pennsylvania Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MPMEP), have had a standing relationship for a number of years, including engagements for strategic planning, quality systems, market research, and development. The two organizations have also cooperated on several training programs (i.e., Executive Coaching, Leadership Team Assessment, and Leadership Skills Training). When Sylvin Technologies needed help addressing the issues causing its customers concern, naturally the company solicited MPMEP to help.

##### **Solution:**

MPMEP and Sylvin Technologies worked together to develop an extruder associate training program that was aligned with the company's strategic business plan and specific customer feedback. MPMEP identified training objectives, metrics, and potential providers, and developed costs and timelines for the training of extrusion associates in a consistent and thorough manner. The proposed training and simulations were computer-based and focused on improving Sylvin associates' expertise in single screw extruder parts and operation; structure of plastic raw materials; characteristics of plastics for extrusion; effects of pressure, temperature and flow; and comprehensive re-training on the specific operation and features of the extrusion machines used at Sylvin

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MPMEP, acting as an agent for Sylvin, applied for and was granted a Customized Job Training (CJT) Grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. The grant covered approximately 75 percent of Sylvin Technologies' extruder training costs.

As expected, Sylvin Technologies did see a decrease in melt temperatures, consistency within and between lots, and in throughput and job cost rates. The increase in output production capacity was the biggest surprise to company management.

### **Results:**

Increased output production capacity by approximately 5 percent.

Decreased melt temperatures.

Improved consistency between lots, in throughput, and in job cost rates.

Thoroughly trained extrusion associates to improve skill level and morale.

### **Testimonial:**

"MANTEC has been instrumental in helping Sylvin navigate to success-- not only from a business perspective but from a 'human' perspective as well...Their experience with reputable organizations has helped develop our Leadership Team, Strategic Planning, Business Planning, and Executive Training. I am excited about our quest, and am equally excited that MANTEC is on our side."

H. Crail Gordon, Jr., Chief Executive Officer